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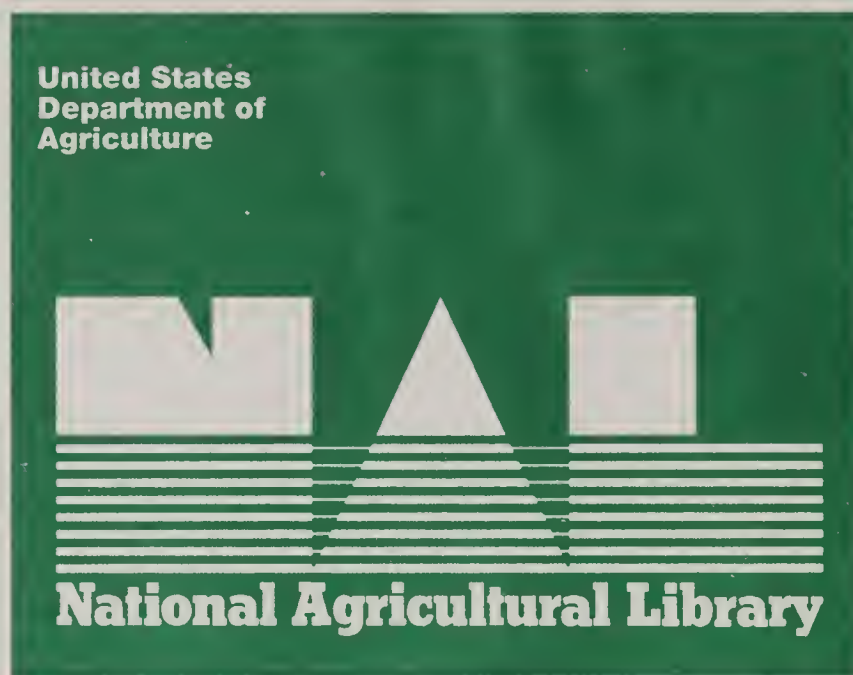
October 1994

Building the Future:

CES Strategic Planning for the 21st Century

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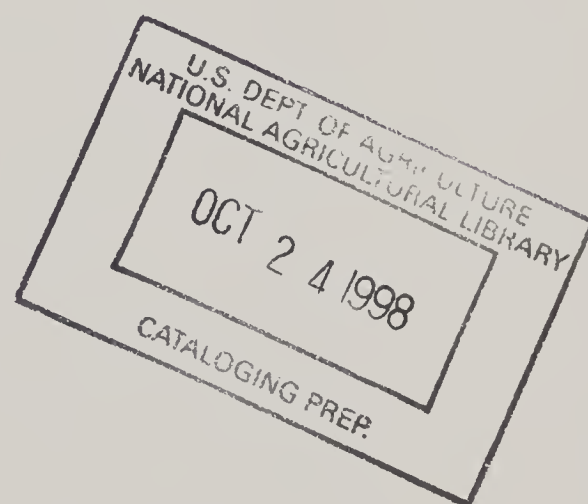
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Introduction

The Cooperative Extension System (CES) is a publicly funded, nonformal educational system that links the educational and research resources and activities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 74 land-grant universities, and 3,150 county administrative units.

The Cooperative Extension System's stated mission is *to help people improve their lives through an educational process that uses scientific knowledge to address issues and needs*. CES is a dynamic, ever-changing organization pledged to meeting the nation's needs for research, knowledge, and educational programs that will enable people to make practical decisions that can improve their lives.

To accomplish its vital mission, CES is constantly changing to meet the shifting needs and priorities of the people it serves. As their needs and priorities change, CES program priorities, organizational structures, and external relationships also must change.

Vision

The Cooperative Extension System:

- *Is a future-oriented, self-renewing, national educational network providing excellence in programs focused on contemporary issues and human needs.*
- *Employs an interactive educational process with state-of-the-art technology—a model that anticipates and capitalizes on the synergy of coalitions and team effort and that actively involves people in issue identification, priority setting, program delivery, and impact assessment.*
- *Creatively delivers programs that are at the cutting edge of critical issues, reflect excellence, are interdisciplinary in nature, have a strong disciplinary base, and make a positive difference in people's lives.*
- *Includes faculty and staff who are sensitive, creative, flexible, forward-looking, risk-taking, and professionally competent; who serve a diverse clientele with interests in the issues identified; and who appreciate and recognize the valuable contributions that volunteers make to successful programming.*
- *Is a diverse and multicultural group that values, is committed to, and embodies diversity and pluralism as a long-term investment in the future and that strives to serve as an organizational role model for others who wish to achieve a pluralistic society.*

Base Programs

Base Programs are major educational efforts that are central to the mission of the Cooperative Extension System and common to most Extension units. Historically, these efforts have been described in various ways—as major projects, program areas, or core programs.

The Base Programs are a set of dynamic, changing, results-oriented educational activities that receive significant resources throughout the System on the national, state, and county levels. The programs form the ongoing priority educational efforts of the System, involving much discipline-based and multidisciplinary subject-matter content. These programs can be thought of as the foundation of a building, with the National Initiatives rising from the base to receive special emphasis for a specific period of time. The current Base Programs are:

- Agriculture
- Community Resources and Economic Development
- Family Development and Resource Management
- 4-H and Youth Development
- Leadership and Volunteer Development
- Natural Resources and Environmental Management
- Nutrition, Diet and Health

The Extension System also has developed strategic plans for diversity and for communications technology and distance education to support and extend the Base Programs and the capacity of the System to meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's customers. In *Building the Future*, CES presents strategic plans in summary form for each of these programs. Task forces comprised of staff from all levels of the Extension System have worked with customers, stakeholders, partners, and other CES faculty to develop the plans.

Agriculture

The Agriculture Base Program emphasizes systems approaches that maintain and enhance agricultural profitability through the application of sound crop and animal production practices. The Cooperative Extension System has played a major role in helping the agricultural sector adopt new technologies and innovations. Today, CES is addressing issues associated with the social and environmental impacts of these technologies (e.g., food safety and quality, surface and ground water contamination, biotechnology, and natural resource management). Soil erosion, increased international competition, and changing consumer preferences contribute to the need for a more balanced and sustainable American agriculture system.

The challenge faced by CES is to help American farmers and ranchers learn to operate whole farm and ranch systems that are sensitive to consumer preferences, environmentally benign, oriented to global marketing trends, and reflective of increasing safety and quality consciousness.

Mission

The Agriculture Mission is to provide science-based information and to facilitate the acquisition and application of knowledge and skills focused on agricultural systems that strive to:

- Meet society's needs for safe, wholesome, and affordable food, fiber, and other renewable resources.
- Meet environmental and social expectations while remaining competitive in a global economy.
- Communicate the value of agriculture to producers, families, communities, and society.
- Support a social and economic system that affords individuals the opportunity to achieve their desired level of living.
- Ensure that people's basic needs for food and fiber are met equitably.
- Value diversity and capitalize on its potential to strengthen all segments of agricultural programs.

CES is addressing issues associated with the social and environmental impacts of technology.

Farmers will optimize income while minimizing environmental impact.

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- *Support the agricultural use of renewable natural resource products and services by methods that will enhance societal quality of life.*
 - *Be sensitive to competing public and private interests in achieving a balance among resource uses.*

To carry out this mission, CES will utilize the knowledge-generating capacity of the land-grant universities and will network with other entities to empower people to fulfill their needs, solve their problems, and realize their opportunities.

Vision

The Agriculture Vision is: *The Cooperative Extension System will be the informal agricultural education organization of choice to provide the leadership that empowers people to solve problems and realize opportunities through customized, agriculture-related programs.*

Goals, Outcomes, and Strategies

The agriculture goals, desired outcomes, and strategies listed below are often targeted to the customized needs of specific constituencies at the local level.

Goal 1. To sustain agriculture that is globally competitive, environmentally compatible, and socially acceptable.

Outcomes. Farms (including agricultural and natural resource-related enterprises) will be characterized by the following outcomes:

- Farms have long-term profitability and stability.
- Farmers use practices and enterprise mixes that will optimize income while minimizing environmental impact.
- Farms are less vulnerable to risks.
- Farmers engage in agricultural production practices that conserve natural resources and avoid contamination.
- Producers understand societal concerns relative to food and environmental quality and engage in practices that are responsive to those concerns.

- The orderly transfer of farm businesses from generation to generation is ensured.
- Producers understand the global market economy and produce for it.
- Farms are safe, healthful places in which to work and live.
- Farmers are involved in community decisionmaking.
- Farms utilize sound employer/employee practices.

Communities will be characterized by:

- Enhanced interconnectedness between the agricultural sector and rural communities—economically, environmentally, and socially.
- Increased self-employment opportunities and higher levels of income in agriculture-related rural enterprises.
- More supportive rural communication, transportation, and marketing infrastructures, and improved inputs for agriculture-related rural enterprises.
- Agriculture that is supportive of rural communities through viable moderate-sized, owner-operated family farms and natural resource-based rural enterprises.
- Greater contributions by farming families to local institutions, schools, religious institutions, health care, and government.
- Communities that are more supportive of farming and of people who are employed in agriculture-related enterprises.
- Greater compatibility and complementarity of agricultural resource use and quality of life in rural communities.
- Enhanced leadership ability and productive capacity of people engaged in agriculture-related enterprises in rural areas.
- Greater inclusion of agriculture in self-development strategies for sustainable community development.
- Valuing of diversity and willingness to capitalize on positive aspects of human differences to build stronger communities.

Society will be characterized by:

- An agricultural system that provides an adequate supply of safe and wholesome food and fiber at a reasonable cost.

Communities will be more supportive of people employed in agriculture-related enterprises.

Public issues education programs will be developed and promoted.

- An agricultural sector that is sensitive to changing environmental, economic, and social expectations.
- Greater public understanding of and appreciation for constraints, challenges, and opportunities confronting production agriculture.
- Public policies that support social and economic systems that afford individuals opportunities to achieve their desired level of living and quality of life.
- Public policies that address the necessity of competing in a global market.
- An understanding of the interdependence of agriculture and society.

Strategies. Possible strategies for the achievement of this goal are to:

- Develop curriculum-based educational programs for the future.
- Demonstrate sustainable agriculture practices to farm and non-farm audiences.
- Develop database and decision support systems.
- Create networks of excellence.
- Utilize innovation incubation centers.
- Link society, communities, and agriculture.
- Define the value of agriculture.
- Develop technologies for agricultural sustainability.
- Plan for intergenerational transfer of agricultural resources.
- Develop and promote public issues education programs.

Goal 2. To make the organizational and agriculture-related programming changes necessary for a favorable impact on CES as well as on the well-being of communities and society.

Outcomes. CES will possess the following characteristics:

- *Structure.* The System is decentralized and flexible, with many potential models, a strong feedback loop, and greater problem-solving capability (i.e., applied research) at the local level.

- *Staff teams, coalitions, and linkages.* Opportunities for collaboration and cooperation with other sources of research information are sought. Interdisciplinary work is supported and encouraged, and teamwork is supported and recognized. Risk-taking is acceptable. Staff are technically competent and people-oriented and have a greater facilitative role. A stronger linkage exists between Extension and research.
- *Diversity.* Staff reflects the diversity of American constituencies. Diverse groups are full and influential participants in decision-making within the organization. Differing world views and academic backgrounds are accepted.
- *Communication.* The organization is better orchestrated and action congruent. Emphasis is placed on planning at the local level while connecting with global concerns. More sharing, with greater trust, is encouraged.
- *Evaluation and reporting.* The quality rather than the quantity of evaluative data is emphasized. The evaluation system measures progress toward the System's vision.
- *Public perception.* The public has a clear, positive perception of the identity and function of CES.
- *Volunteers.* Volunteers are used to their fullest potential in a variety of roles, with appropriate recognition.

Opportunities for collaboration with other sources of research information will be sought.

Strategies. Strategies for the achievement of this goal are to:

- Develop a shared vision and mission for CES agricultural programs in a dynamic society.
- Establish a collaborative networking model for Extension programming.
- Develop a bill of rights for CES clientele.
- Develop a CES code of ethics.
- Design a system for program planning, implementation, evaluation, and accountability.
- Develop expanded capability to utilize new science-based technologies for systematic improvement in the following areas: program planning and implementation; the public issues education process; total quality management concepts; methodology that addresses program, staff, and audience diversity; the learning-teaching organizational model; principles and

practices of team and coalition building; communication and networking approaches and technology; and leadership and organizational management skills.

- Value diversity among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and other human differences.
- Improve research and CES linkages.

Community Resources and Economic Development

Educational programs in Community Resources and Economic Development (CRED) emphasize development at the community level. CRED enhances the well-being of community residents by providing educational programs in economic development, physical and social infrastructure, natural resources and the environment, leadership, public policy awareness, and local government.

Like any other effort in our increasingly interdependent world, the CRED Base Program should not be viewed as an independent entity. It relates closely to the goals and objectives of other CES programs and will be successful only if it is applied in the context of the entire System.

Mission

The CRED Mission is: *To improve the long-term well-being of communities, the CRED Program provides research-based and experience-based education and facilitation for community groups.*

Vision

The CRED Vision is: *Extension CRED is sought as a highly valued educational network and collaborator by individuals and groups working to strengthen the capabilities of communities to achieve their desired futures.*

To realize the CRED Vision, Extension will:

- Provide communities equal access to sustained, quality programmatic support provided by staff trained in community resources and economic development.
- Provide specific program design and delivery of information and resources to communities nationwide.
- Help communities take responsibility for determining their own futures.

The CRED Program relates closely to the goals and objectives of other CES programs.

Communities will foster small business retention and expansion.

- Develop appropriate constituency groups to design, obtain, and maintain necessary resources to sustain effective programs.
- Develop and foster Congressional support for CRED programs.
- Utilize Regional Rural Development Centers in designing, developing, and delivering CRED programs across state boundaries.
- Collaborate with other agencies.
- Focus, together with other Extension Base Programs and National Initiatives, on issues critical to the long-term well-being of our society.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

The strategic goals and objectives of the Community Resources and Economic Development Program are listed below.

Goal 1. Community residents and leaders understand economic forces, challenges, and opportunities.

- People can interpret local economic data and systems.
- People understand the economic impact of policy changes.
- Community residents and/or leaders pursue strategies to add value to agriculture and natural resource-sector products, including identification of alternative crops with value-added potential.
- Leaders and communities understand the linkages between health care and economic development and support an environment that leads to strong, healthy families.

Goal 2. Community residents and leaders strengthen their business bases.

- Community residents and/or leaders foster small business retention and expansion.
- Small businesses write and use business plans.
- Community residents and/or leaders enhance income generation through tourism.
- Community residents and/or leaders diversify their business bases.

- Telecommunications technology plays a major role in expanding local economies.
- Community residents and/or leaders strengthen their health care services.

Goal 3. People have the capability to understand and influence change.

Community residents and/or leaders have:

- More inclusive decisionmaking processes and actions.
- A process for actively involving all segments of the community in community decisionmaking.
- A variety of conflict management strategies.
- Strategic planning, decisionmaking, and implementation capabilities.
- Democratic processes for addressing local issues.

Local government officials will be better managers of public resources.

Goal 4. Local government officials better understand community development issues.

Specifically, they:

- Access and interpret objective data.
- Are knowledgeable about fiscal management innovations and practices.
- Are better managers of public resources.
- Are able to respond effectively to emerging state and federal regulations and mandates.
- Are knowledgeable about conflict management and negotiation strategies.

Goal 5. Through wide participation, communities are able to address significant issues, with access to all relevant information.

More specifically:

- Citizens are actively involved in defining and contributing to the future of their communities.
- Citizens are better informed on issues such as health care reform; natural disaster response; natural resource issues; tax and local revenue issues; economic development; land-use

planning; government service provision and sharing strategies; solid waste management; and local government structure and operation.

Goal 6. Community residents and/or leaders understand the importance of physical and social infrastructures.

Community residents and/or leaders:

- Better understand the financing of infrastructure.
- Engage in multicomunity collaboration.
- Use strategic planning and implementation for infrastructure needs.
- Strengthen their local organizational network.

Goal 7. Community residents and/or leaders understand their relationship to the environment.

Community residents and/or leaders:

- Develop cost-effective measures for handling environmental problems.
- Demonstrate knowledge of environmental management systems.
- Resolve conflicts between environmental goals and economic development strategies.

Goal 8. CES expands its capacity to engage in effective community resource and economic development.

Specifically:

- Legislative and executive policymakers understand and value the CES Community Resources and Economic Development Program.
- Extension administrators and other decisionmakers seek and provide sufficient resources to implement Community Resources and Economic Development programs.
- Extension creates effective presentations that describe the successes and needs of Community Resources and Economic Development programs.

Communities will engage in multicomunity collaboration.

Implementation

To carry out these goals, 12 objectives for Community Resources and Economic Development are suggested:

1. To teach local economic development leaders to interpret and apply economic data to local development decisions. (Tools: consultants, workshops, and technical assistance.)
2. To educate local economic developers on strategy options for business retention and expansion, retail and service development, and tourism development and/or expansion. (Tools: workshops, strategic planning, and technical assistance.)
3. To assist community decisionmakers in developing strategies to add value to agricultural and natural resource products. (Tools: consultants, newsletters and publications, and technical assistance.)
4. To assist community decisionmakers in understanding the linkages among community services (e.g., education and health care) and economic development. (Tools: community groups, newsletters and publications, and the communications media.)
5. To assist community residents and leaders in establishing business retention and expansion programs. (Tools: consultants and community groups.)
6. To assist community decisionmakers in developing strategies to examine the potential of tourism to augment income. (Tools: community groups, strategic planning, the communications media, and feasibility studies.)
7. To collaborate with Small Business Development Centers to help community residents, decisionmakers, and leaders write and use business plans. (Tools: consultants, workshops, technical assistance, and strategic planning.)
8. To assist community residents in enhancing income through the establishment or expansion of tourism. (Tools: community groups, workshops, and newsletters and publications.)
9. To assist community residents and leaders in understanding and using telecommunications technology as an economic tool. (Tools: consultants, workshops, technical assistance, newsletters and publications, and electronic technology.)

Communities will resolve conflicts between environmental goals and economic development strategies.

Community leadership development programs will lead to inclusive decisionmaking processes.

10. To assist community leaders and decisionmakers in developing economic policies and strategies that resolve conflicts between environmental impacts and economic development. (Tools: workshops and community groups.)

11. To conduct community leadership development programs that lead to inclusive decisionmaking processes. (Tools: workshops and community groups.)

12. To teach government officials to access and objectively interpret data; implement appropriate fiscal management practices; respond effectively to emerging state and federal regulations; and manage and negotiate conflicts. (Tools: consultants, workshops, newsletters and publications, and electronic technology.)

Family Development and Resource Management

Educational programs in Family Development and Resource Management (FDRM) help individuals and families develop the competencies to become healthy, productive, financially secure, environmentally responsible members of society. Because family issues are complex, an interdisciplinary approach is vital. The knowledge base for the FDRM Program is drawn from family and consumer economics; psychology; resource management; family studies; education; social work; anthropology; human development; natural sciences; community development; political science, and public administration.

Two major categories are critical to FDRM programs: (1) managing family resources, including housing, and (2) fostering successful family relationships. To help families function at their highest level, FDRM programs teach skills in critical thinking and decisionmaking. Individuals and families positively affect public policy, social issues, and their own lifestyles.

FDRM programs focus on:

- Personal and family financial management
- Housing decisions
- Parenting and family relationships
- Environmental quality
- Child, youth, and adult development

The ability of families to function in a supportive economic and social environment is increasingly challenged by child abuse and neglect; environmental mismanagement; homelessness; illiteracy; inadequate child care; inadequate, costly housing; inadequate financial management skills; personal financial insecurity; and poorly informed consumers. Of equal concern are the challenges posed by poverty; spiraling health-care costs; substance abuse; teen and unintended pregnancy; threatened cultural values; violence in homes and communities; and inadequate services for dependent elderly.

FDRM programs teach skills in critical thinking and decisionmaking.

Mission

The FDRM Mission is: *The Family Development and Resource Management Base Program helps families develop the skills to nurture, support, and guide their members throughout their lives, to grow in economic security, and to contribute to and be supported by caring communities.*

FDRM educators will work with other family-serving agencies and organizations.

Vision

The FDRM Vision is: *The Extension Family Development and Resource Management Base Program will be the foremost nonformal, nationwide educational program addressing the most pressing economic and social issues facing families.*

This vision implies that:

- Family Development and Resource Management educators will work with other family-serving agencies and organizations to foster families and communities that are supportive of the people who live in them.
- Families, family-serving agencies and organizations, and policymakers in all government sectors will view the Extension FDRM Base Program as a vital resource for developing skills to respond to pressing issues affecting families.
- Family-related research, education, and program evaluation will be sufficient priorities in the land-grant university system to provide the professional staff and research base for sound program development, knowledge transfer, practice adoption, and program evaluation.
- Information on technology, research, policies, and other areas will be disseminated in practical, readily accessible ways for timely application by individuals, families, communities, and policy decisionmakers.
- Individuals and families will be involved in all aspects of planning to identify emerging issues and to develop educational programs.
- FDRM educational programs will show measurable program outcomes.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategic Actions

The goals, objectives, and strategic actions of the Family Development and Resource Management Program are listed on the following pages.

Goal 1. To strengthen the capacity of families to nurture, support, and guide their members throughout their lives.

Objectives. Families will:

- Increase parenting skills related to caring for oneself; understanding, motivating, nurturing, and guiding one's children; and serving as an advocate as needed.
- Improve skills in utilizing information for increasing marital and family communication, resolving family conflicts, and making effective decisions.
- Provide support for adult development and for family members facing the physical, emotional, and psychological challenges of aging.

Goal 2. To strengthen the capacity of families to establish and maintain economic security and a quality environment.

Objectives. Families will:

- Improve skills in evaluating information, resolving conflicts, and making effective decisions.
- Make food, shelter, and clothing choices consistent with their resources.
- Assess resources from multiple sources, including those at the community, state, and federal levels.
- Plan spending, saving, and investing to meet changing needs throughout the life cycle.
- Understand the effects of economic and environmental decisions on families and communities.
- Choose safe, affordable housing.
- Maintain and enhance home equity through repairs and rehabilitation.

Families will provide support to members facing the challenges of aging.

Goal 3. To strengthen the capacity of families and communities to be partners in building strong families and caring, safe communities.

Objectives. Families will:

- Recognize and use community resources effectively.
- Understand their rights and responsibilities for public well-being.
- Participate in decisions about public issues affecting families.

Communities will:

- Provide a more functional environment for supporting strong, healthy families.
- Modify or develop policies in the public, private, and nonprofit sector that support effective family functioning.
- Create and sustain community services that provide quality care for children and the elderly.
- Encourage and assist employers in using and expanding resources for work-family balance and workplace practices that are supportive of families.

Goal 4. To recognize, develop, and link the family development and resource management expertise of professionals at all levels of the System.

Objectives. Extension will:

- Provide formal and informal opportunities for Extension professionals to increase their technological and subject-matter expertise.
- Develop user-friendly technological linkages throughout the System.
- Recognize excellence in program development and delivery.

Strategic Actions. Several strategic actions, summarized below, are common to these goals:

- *Diversity.* Members of family and community support systems will be understanding of racial, ethnic, cultural, and economic

Families will participate in decisions about public issues affecting families.

differences and will respond in ways that nurture and strengthen all families.

- *Participant involvement.* People representing the diversity of the population will be involved in planning, developing, delivering, and evaluating educational programs.
- *Research.* Family- and community-related research will strengthen the knowledge base for educating parents, consumers, children, policymakers, agencies, and organizations.
- *Internal partnerships.* FDRM educators will reduce duplication of effort by working together across disciplines, through multi-state and national efforts, and with support from the Children, Youth and Families National Extension Networks for Action on Family Resiliency, Child Care, and Collaborations.
- *External partnerships.* FDRM will create and/or collaborate with local, state, and national coalitions to develop programs that address the most pressing issues facing families.

FDRM will collaborate with local, state, and national coalitions.

Implementation

The effective implementation of this strategic plan demands a concerted, highly visible effort. The goal is to gain significant commitment for implementing the strategic plan in every state and county in the nation. The implementation strategy is guided by four themes:

- *Program accountability.* To establish program accountability, emphasis must be placed on setting priorities, designing accountability models, and evaluating programs.
- *Enhanced communication.* Productive communication must take place both within and outside CES; among federal, state, territorial, and regional groups; and among constituencies and policymakers. FDRM efforts must focus on articulating the contributions of the federal Extension partner; influencing family-focused program decisions consistent with the plan; coordinating with other Base Programs, National Initiatives, and priorities; and positioning the Family Development and Resource Management Program to shape the agenda.
- *Active partnerships.* Emphasis must be placed on increased networking, collaboration, and cooperation with other groups.

-
- *Strategic funding.* FDRM efforts must focus on reallocating existing dollars and on acquiring new resources.

The plan also calls for CES leaders and key players concerned with Family Development and Resource Management to:

1. Conduct a national meeting for CES leaders and family-focused program teams. Its purposes will be to (a) create a common understanding of the plan's purpose, direction, and program content; (b) gain agreement on a process and timetable for developing state and/or regional plans for implementation; (c) develop a process for raising issues for consideration as National Initiatives and for facilitating the transfer of other National Initiatives back into Base Programs; and (d) introduce FDRM concepts as well as a preliminary planning process for program outcome assessment and reporting under the Government Performance Review Act.

Similar meetings could be organized at the state level to bring together both Extension and non-Extension FDRM professionals to discuss potential collaborative programs.

2. Identify exemplary programs annually, based on criteria determined by a CES/collaborator task force. These programs will be featured in promotional and internal communication strategies.

3. Convene a Review Panel annually to assess implementation progress and recommend future actions.

Exemplary FDRM programs will be identified annually.

4-H and Youth Development

4-H and Youth Development programs focus on building lifelong learning skills that develop youths' potential. This extensive set of programs is designed to engage youth in healthy learning experiences that increase self-esteem and problem-solving skills. Programs address topics such as stress management, self-protection, parent-teen communication, personal development, careers, outreach and interchange, and global understanding. A wide range of content offerings encourages youth to explore science, technology, and citizenship.

4-H and Youth Development programs are designed to increase youths' self-esteem and problem-solving skills.

Mission

The mission of the 4-H and Youth Development Program is *to create supportive environments in which culturally diverse youth and adults can reach their fullest potential.*

To support this mission, Extension will provide formal and non-formal community-focused experiential learning; develop skills that benefit youth throughout life; foster leadership and volunteerism in youth and adults; build internal and external partnerships for programming and funding; strengthen families and communities; and use research-based knowledge available from the land-grant university system and other sources. Successful efforts in carrying out this mission will result in capable, competent, and caring citizens.

Vision

The 4-H and Youth Development Vision is: *4-H is a world leader in developing youths' ability to become productive citizens and catalysts for positive change to meet the needs of a diverse and changing society. Through 4-H youth development education, youth will:*

- Practice effective problem-solving and decisionmaking skills.
- Practice responsible health behavior.
- Be environmental stewards.
- Possess positive work attitudes and skills.

An electronic network system will be established to monitor and review curricula.

- Value diversity.
- Have a strong sense of community and social responsibility.
- Contribute to positive relationships with families, peers, and community.
- Demonstrate communication and leadership skills.
- Value lifelong learning.
- Feel the personal pride that comes with mastery.
- Feel valued and utilized as a resource in the community.

Goals and Actions

The goals of the 4-H and Youth Development Program, as well as actions for each goal, are listed below.

Goal 1. To reshape the process by which 4-H learning experiences and relationships are designed and delivered to meet the needs of diverse populations of youth, volunteers, business and academic partners, and collaborating youth development organizations. This will be accomplished in a manner that anticipates change, using methods that align with 4-H values.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

- Continue the work of the Experiential Learning Design Team to formulate criteria for the identification, review, development, and management of curricula based on the experiential learning model.
- Conduct staff and volunteer training and improve communication linkages to facilitate diffusion and adoption of curricula based on experiential learning.
- Continue the National Juried Curriculum Process for validation of curricula based on the experiential learning model.
- Implement an electronic network system for monitoring and reviewing current curricula and developing new curricula.
- Develop multidisciplinary networks to support environmental education based on applied environmental research.
- Focus the learning experience on children, youth, and families with high risk factors.

- Implement the recognition model in all aspects of programming.
- Use available technology to enhance the learning experience.
- Conduct research to assess program impact.

Goal 2. To manage the 4-H image to ensure compatibility with 4-H Values, ensure support of diversity in all program endeavors, and build an image of the 4-H Program as a world leader in youth development education.

Achievement of this goal will be facilitated by understanding current perceptions of the 4-H Program; identifying the changes required to move from a perceived to a desired image; and empowering youth, volunteers, and alumni to align the 4-H Vision with this image. Customers and partners will be consulted frequently to ensure that progress toward a new 4-H image occurs in harmony with their changing needs.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

- Determine public perceptions of 4-H and assess the degree to which these perceptions are consistent with the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission.
- Design a plan for youth, volunteers, and professional staff to communicate the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission to the public.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to shape the perception of various customer segments consistent with the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission.
- Develop a system for the packaging and delivery of 4-H programs and activities that reinforces an image consistent with the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission.
- Enhance public understanding of 4-H through strategic partnerships and collaboration.
- Establish and support youth media action teams.

Goal 3. To offer professional development programs that will facilitate recognition of Extension staff as world leaders in quality youth development education.

Public perceptions of 4-H will be assessed in terms of the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission.

These programs will be based on a set of competencies for youth development professionals utilizing the Professional Research and Knowledge Taxonomy Model, specialized training programs for professional staff, and the efforts of a culturally diverse staff that addresses the needs of a changing society.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

- Develop and implement a system to identify and hire a culturally diverse staff based on identified professional competencies.
- Implement an ongoing system to orient and train staff based on identified professional competencies.
- Develop and market a case statement for an undergraduate and graduate degree program in youth development.
- Implement collaborative youth development education programs with other organizations.
- Strengthen the role of Extension faculty in identifying, conducting, and utilizing applied youth development research.
- Utilize technology to implement these programs.

Goal 4. To develop internal and external partnerships of mutual benefit through identification of shared needs.

Partnerships must be based upon shared perceptions of the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission. The vision, values, and mission will be shared with all program partners in a manner that clearly and continually identifies mutual requirements that align with and support 4-H youth development priorities.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

- Strengthen partnerships among the USDA Extension Service, the National 4-H Council, and state and local organizations.
- Develop a system for initiation, management, and enhancement of family partnerships with 4-H programs.
- Develop a system for initiation, management, and enhancement of school and community partnerships with 4-H programs.
- Develop a system for initiation, management, and enhancement of public and private partnerships with 4-H programs.

Collaborative youth development education programs will be implemented with other organizations.

- Develop a system for initiation, management, and enhancement of university partnerships with 4-H.

Goal 5. To involve youth actively as equal partners and resources in defining, developing, implementing, and continually diversifying and improving 4-H youth development education.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

- Develop and implement an orientation and educational program for professional and adult volunteer staff in which youth are viewed as equal partners in the educational process.
- Involve youth in full decisionmaking roles on committees and boards at all levels of the Extension System.
- Involve youth in teaching and research roles.
- Involve diverse populations of youth in needs assessments to determine critical issues they face, and develop new programs based on the assessments.
- Encourage youth to explore the creation of a national youth leadership role and structure, including an appropriate role for collegiate 4-H members.

Youth will be involved in teaching and research roles.

Goal 6. To develop a process for recruiting and educating youth and adult volunteers and for managing and recognizing their efforts.

This process, which will be based on appropriate competency models, will be designed to align the needs of 4-H programs with the aspirations of volunteers. Thus, the importance of the total volunteer effort in support of the 4-H Vision, Values, and Mission will be established as a key success factor.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

- Design a volunteer development curriculum and educate state and county professional 4-H staff in its use.
- Develop a system for the recruitment, education, and recognition of diverse populations of adult and youth volunteers.
- Develop volunteer position descriptions, including a skills inventory that can be used in the recruitment and education of new volunteers.

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- Design and disseminate an instrument that can be used to assess the skills and performance of volunteers.
 - Develop and implement collaborative volunteer education programs with other organizations.
 - Establish 4-H as a key partner in local youth service and service-learning programs.

Leadership and Volunteer Development

As a public agency, Extension must distinguish itself by fostering public well-being. Leadership and volunteer development work, more than any other part of Extension education, transforms the private gains of individual program participants into community well-being.

Leadership development builds the capacities of individuals, groups, and organizations to resolve community issues. Volunteer development enhances the potential for community service. The two disciplines share a common focus: human capacity-building for public well-being.

The building blocks for leadership and volunteer development consist of personal, interpersonal, and group development. Examples of educational topics include:

- *Personal development*—assessing one's strengths and weaknesses, critical and creative thinking, and values clarification.
- *Interpersonal development*—active and reflective listening, giving and receiving feedback, and influencing others.
- *Group development*—group process skills, understanding stages of group development, team-building, conflict resolution, development of a shared vision from diverse interests, and group decisionmaking.

In addition, leadership development emphasizes the role and function of leadership. Personal development is valued not as an end in itself but rather as a prerequisite to effective service as a community leader and volunteer.

Changes in both thought and practice have occurred in leadership and volunteer development. Traditionally, leaders have been viewed as individuals within hierarchies making autonomous decisions in a competitive environment. In contrast, contemporary leaders seek new ways to collaborate and build partnerships and coalitions within and between groups. Emphasis is placed on participatory, shared leadership roles in which the group takes

Leadership development builds people's capacity to resolve community issues, and volunteer development enhances their potential for community service.

responsibility for making decisions and "owning" them; developing a shared vision; and valuing the learning that comes from group problem solving. These group responsibilities also are sought in volunteer development settings. Collaborative approaches are used to tap the competencies of unpaid staff in solving community and organizational problems.

All Extension educational programs have the potential to include a strong leadership and volunteer development component.

The complex issues facing communities today require Extension educators to draw upon a variety of information sources. In addition to knowledge bases generated in academia, the Leadership and Volunteer Development Program draws on knowledge bases provided by foundations, institutes, public agencies, private organizations, business and industry, professional practitioners, and communities. Disciplines as far-ranging as business management, education, history, military science, and sociology provide knowledge that strengthens people's ability to enhance their own well-being as well as that of their families and communities.

Mission

The mission of the Leadership and Volunteer Development Program is *to enhance the capacity of diverse individuals to take action to improve the well-being of self, families, and communities.*

All Extension educational programs have the potential to include a strong leadership and volunteer development component. Thus, the concepts and methods associated with this Base Program apply to each of the other Base Programs as well.

Vision

The Leadership and Volunteer Development Vision is that of *a world in which all people have the wisdom, capacity, and passion to make a difference for public well-being.* This vision challenges Extension personnel to expand their efforts to include leadership and volunteer development curricula in all Extension programs.

Goals and Actions

CES has adopted three goals for leadership and volunteer development: developing capacity, mobilizing action, and building

linkages. These goals, along with proposed actions and strategies for each, are listed below.

***Goal 1.** To build the leadership and volunteer capacity of individuals, groups, organizations, and communities to take action for public well-being.*

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

1. Collaborate with informal groups, organizations, agencies, and foundations to build leadership and volunteer capacity.
2. Assist people in developing skills for establishing and strengthening effective partnerships and collaborations.
3. Design, implement, and assess educational programs with leadership and volunteer development components in order to address community issues and public needs.
4. Integrate leadership and volunteer development content with that of other Base Programs.
5. Review, compile, and disseminate curriculum materials in leadership and volunteer development.
6. Provide educational opportunities for people to develop skills and competencies in problem solving, conflict resolution, arbitration, mediation, and negotiation.
7. Increase individuals' access to leadership and volunteer development opportunities, programs, and community organizations.
8. Match people's interests with opportunities to contribute to public well-being.

***Goal 2.** To mobilize a strong and diverse leader and volunteer corps to take public action within communities and organizations.*

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

1. Collaborate with foundations, organizations, agencies, and informal groups to expand opportunities for leaders and volunteers to address public issues.
2. Implement public issues education as a way of encouraging groups and organizations to take action.

Leadership and volunteer development programs will match people's interests with opportunities to contribute to public well-being.

Leadership and volunteer development programs will enhance the capacity of groups to address a wide range of public issues.

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3. Identify opportunities for community leaders, prospective leaders, and volunteers—both within and outside of Extension—to be of service.
 4. Link leaders and volunteers to opportunities that require increasing levels of responsibility.
 5. Encourage individuals and groups to get involved in public issues and to contribute to public well-being by providing inspiration, mentoring, and support.
 6. Support leaders and volunteers as they mentor others who are becoming involved in public issues.
 7. Prepare leaders and volunteers to serve in a variety of groups and organizations.

Goal 3. To facilitate and sustain diverse partnerships, collaborations, and networks for effective community action.

Actions. Key actions for this goal are to:

1. Assist communities in identifying partners with shared interests, issues, and concerns.
2. Convene people and groups with diverse interests to address public issues and needs.
3. Encourage the development of an inventory of community organizations and groups. The inventory should include items on members' interests, resources, and leadership and volunteer development needs.
4. Provide examples of effective collaborations and partnerships.
5. Enhance the capacity of groups to address a range of public issues by enhancing their ability to engage in long-term planning, create organizational structures, and muster resources.

Outcomes

Extension efforts in leadership and volunteer development in all Base Programs will increase:

1. The confidence with which people participate in community affairs.

2. People's appreciation of their right and responsibility to be involved in matters affecting public well-being.
3. The opportunity for public dialogue and community action.
4. Communication among all community members.
5. Communication, cooperation, coalition development, and collaboration among community groups.
6. Extension participation in networks, collaborations, and partnerships with other groups and organizations involved in leadership and volunteer development.
7. Enlightened participation in public issues decisionmaking.
8. The ability of community groups to identify priorities and take action.
9. Volunteer activity at the local level.

To conduct effective leadership and volunteer development work, CES must access a strong interdisciplinary research base.

Implementation

To conduct effective leadership and volunteer development work, the Cooperative Extension System must:

- Be committed to the integration of theory, philosophy, and practice.
- Access a strong interdisciplinary research base.
- Be committed to the maintenance of a competent and effective staff.
- Be recognized for excellence in leadership and volunteer development efforts.

To provide overall leadership for the implementation of this plan, the Extension Committee on Policy and the Extension Service will appoint the Leadership and Volunteer Development Implementation Team. The team will:

- Design and implement a marketing strategy for the Leadership and Volunteer Development strategic plan.
- Convene a national summit in order to establish networks and foster other collaborative efforts.
- Provide technical assistance to individual states.

Each state is encouraged to develop a comprehensive plan for leadership and volunteer development.

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- Monitor and update the Leadership and Volunteer Development strategic plan.
 - Compile, critique, and augment existing curricula from the states and other sources.
 - Identify and highlight model programs.
 - Gain access to (or develop) a leadership and volunteer development database and clearinghouse.
 - Establish a network through which Extension staff can share experience and expertise nationally and internationally.
 - Plan, institute, and evaluate staff training on leadership and volunteer development.
 - Identify and critique research from a broad array of public and private sources.
 - Seek grants and other resources to support innovative leadership and volunteer development work.
 - Develop collaborative relationships (including memoranda of understanding) with groups in both the public and private sectors, including leadership and volunteer development centers.
 - Recommend guidelines for the leadership and volunteer development components of state Extension plans of work and accomplishment reports.
 - Recommend performance indicators for state reporting of program outcomes.
 - Review the leadership and volunteer development components of state Extension plans of work and accomplishment reports.
 - Compile and publish data on Extension leadership and volunteer development efforts.

Guided by this plan, each state Cooperative Extension Service is encouraged to develop a comprehensive leadership and volunteer development plan that can be integrated with the other Base Programs. States also are encouraged to look to the Implementation Team for technical assistance and support in the development of their own strategic plans.

Natural Resources and Environmental Management

The Natural Resources and Environmental Management (NREM) Program addresses educational needs related to the management, use, and sustainability of renewable and nonrenewable natural resources. Drawing on a variety of disciplines, NREM programs typically focus on such topics as soil, water, air, plant and animal life, forests, rangelands, and aquatic and other ecosystems. Also taught are concepts related to public issues education, land-use planning, processes of shared decisionmaking, and the effective use of information systems.

Mission

The mission of the Natural Resources and Environmental Management Program is *to educate a diverse people to make decisions and take actions to improve the quality, productivity, and sustainability of natural resources.*

Vision

The NREM vision is: *Extension is a premier provider of education to sustain natural resources.* To realize this vision fully, Extension will need to enter into new collaborations and cultivate new partnerships. Through new and existing partnerships, Extension can provide the expertise and leadership necessary to develop collaborative, issue-focused, state-of-the-art programs to help people solve problems, strengthen the natural resource base, and ensure the economic security of present and future generations.

Strategic Goals and Actions

Three strategic goals have been established to support Extension efforts in Natural Resources and Environmental Management education. Embedded in all three is a common fourth goal: *to increase the diversity of NREM educators, programs, and customers.* The strategic goals, along with actions and strategies for each, are listed on the following pages.

To realize the NREM Vision fully, Extension will need to enter into new collaborations and partnerships.

Goal 1. Building systemwide commitment. Realizing Extension's vision will require a renewed commitment to NREM programming on the part of all Extension personnel.

Action 1. Extension leadership will ensure systemwide awareness of diverse public needs and concerns about natural resources and environmental issues.

Realizing Extension's Vision will require a renewed commitment to NREM programming throughout the System.

Strategy 1. Extension leadership (the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy and the USDA Extension Service), in consultation with the Program Leadership Committee, will establish a National NREM Support Team. The composition of this team will be consistent with guidelines in the *Pathway to Diversity* plan. The team will be charged with the implementation of processes to involve diverse audiences broadly in program planning and development.

Strategy 2. The National Support Team will coordinate with state programs to describe the extent of diverse public interests and needs related to NREM, as determined by state support teams. Issues will be defined through existing knowledge and processes within states and territories and will be augmented as necessary by research and published reports.

Strategy 3. The National Support Team will compile and consolidate the results of studies and focus group discussions, suggestions from consultants, and other input. This information will be shared with the System for dissemination to stakeholders (e.g., via newsletters, conferences, and national and regional videoconferences).

Action 2. States and territories will assess capabilities and available resources for NREM programs, set priorities and directions, and determine additional resource needs. Data on these topics, along with other input, will be used by the National Support Team to develop an assessment of systemwide capacity.

Strategy 1. State/territorial 1862 Extension directors and 1890 Extension administrators will appoint NREM coordinators and state support teams who will be responsible for assessing local needs and capacities and for coordinating state efforts. States may use or modify the existing structure of committees and coordinators as desired. State and territorial teams will reflect

and represent diverse people and interests. County teams may be established as appropriate.

Strategy 2. Diverse public interests and needs will be determined locally through an ongoing process of scanning and responsive dialogue with CES customers (needs assessment). Scanning efforts should be coordinated with existing organizational processes (e.g., state Renewable Resources Extension Act advisory committees). State assessments will be compiled by the National NREM Support Team.

Strategy 3. The results of local needs assessments (Strategy 2) and scanning efforts to determine Extension's educational capacity will be used by Extension staff in state and territorial 1862 and 1890 universities to develop state strategic plans for NREM. Progress toward the strategic goals will be assessed through existing accountability and evaluation reporting processes.

Action 3. Increase program capability, collaboration, and System awareness of NREM within geographic regions.

Strategy 1. The National NREM Support Team will work with regional contacts to organize and conduct regional workshops. The purpose of these workshops will be to familiarize state and territorial NREM teams with the Strategic Plan and implementation steps and to coordinate team efforts.

Strategy 2. County, state/territorial, and national support teams will conduct regional meetings, conferences, workshops, and other events to share NREM program examples, tools, and technologies. Meetings will involve faculty from the total university as well as nonuniversity experts, collaborators, and interests.

Goal 2. Demonstrating program excellence. Extension administrators and educators as well as the public will be eager to support quality NREM programs that meet priority needs.

Action 1. The Extension System will identify, develop, demonstrate, and market NREM programs focused on issues related to land and natural resource utilization, economic impacts, and sustained environmental quality. Programs of excellence that meet

Diverse public interests and needs will be determined locally.

established criteria will be recognized as flagship programs. States are encouraged to adopt their own criteria for flagship programs.

Strategy 1. CES will create flagship programs addressing NREM issues.

A reward system will be established to recognize interdisciplinary NREM programs and participants.

Action 2. NREM programs can be strengthened through the use of multidisciplinary expertise related to environmental issues. Educational efforts will involve other Base Programs in the development of an integrated NREM program.

Strategy 1. Extension leaders at all levels will establish or expand incentives to involve interdisciplinary teams from land-grant universities in the development and implementation of NREM programs.

Strategy 2. National, state, and territorial NREM support teams will articulate issues of common interest shared with other Base Programs and initiatives and will design processes to address common issues.

Strategy 3. The NREM support teams will develop promotional materials for environmental improvement programs resulting from collaborative work among Extension staff from more than one discipline, Base Program, or initiative.

Action 3. NREM programs will be reviewed by state NREM support teams.

Strategy 1. State NREM support teams will review flagship programs based on the mission, vision, values, and attributes of the NREM program, including diversity goals.

Strategy 2. States and territories will conduct NREM program reviews, compile data, and transmit results to the National NREM Support Team. The National Team will develop a detailed written report to be shared with the states and territories and with Extension leadership.

Action 4. A reward system will be established at the state level, supported by the state/territorial directors and administrators, to recognize interdisciplinary NREM programs and participating staff, collaborators, and volunteers.

Strategy 1. The national state NREM support teams will enlist support from industry and business to recognize interdisciplinary NREM programs.

Strategy 2. The National NREM Support Team will create a national awards committee representing the diverse interests of the public and private sector to develop award criteria for flagship programs; provide funding to extend the impact of flagship programs; design a national symbol to identify flagship programs; and present national awards.

Goal 3. Mobilizing human, fiscal, and knowledge resources. High-priority actions include building expertise and diversity, developing partnerships, and expanding the fiscal resource base.

Action 1. Cooperative Extension will utilize existing educators with expertise in NREM subject matter, collaboration processes, and grantsmanship in order to build greater diversification among staff and stakeholders.

Strategy 1. The National Support Team will develop a guidance statement for use by state and territorial NREM teams to implement processes that involve county- and area-based Extension educators and grassroots stakeholders in program development. State and territorial NREM teams subsequently will develop and implement appropriate processes.

Strategy 2. The state and territorial NREM teams will work with state, area, and county Extension educators to identify, define, and assign specific liaison responsibilities that link Extension with specific stakeholder agencies and organizations.

Strategy 3. The National NREM Support Team will work with state and territorial NREM coordinators and teams to organize and initiate innovative professional development opportunities for Extension educators, paraprofessionals, and volunteer staff on key state or territorial NREM issues.

Action 2. Extension educators will draw upon the combined expertise and knowledge of a wide range of university faculty, including faculty from 1862 and 1890 land-grant institutions and other institutions, to address NREM issues.

Extension educators will draw upon the expertise and knowledge of a wide range of university faculty.

CES will develop partnerships and proposals to expand resources for NREM.

Strategy 1. State and territorial Extension directors and administrators will establish NREM collaborative efforts (research and teaching) between Extension and academic units throughout the total university.

Action 3. The Cooperative Extension System will develop partnerships and proposals to expand the resources available to meet the need for NREM educational models, materials, and curricula.

Strategy 1. Prepare an NREM agenda for the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy and the USDA Extension Service to consider for their fiscal year 1996 federal budget requests. The agenda will highlight current state and territorial NREM programs and will reflect the priorities of grassroots Extension educators and stakeholders.

Strategy 2. Using input from state and territorial Extension educators and stakeholders, each state/territorial NREM support team will prepare an NREM agenda with a budget that reflects county and state/territorial program priorities.

Strategy 3. The national and state/territorial NREM support teams will consider centers, institutes, regional resource development centers, and expert teams for use in addressing pertinent NREM issues. These analyses will be compiled for consideration by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy in the budget development process.

Strategy 4. The NREM national and state/territorial support teams will develop processes and avenues by which to obtain external funding to support priority NREM issues.

Implementation

The National NREM Support Team will work with the state/territorial and local support teams to realize the NREM Vision. Progress toward a systemwide NREM Program will be marked by the establishment of an NREM network that connects county, state, territorial, regional, and national Extension educators; evidence of widespread resource sharing among counties, universities, states, and territories; and widespread use of a reporting system that supports local, state, territorial, and national planning and accountability needs.

Nutrition, Diet and Health

Educational programs in Nutrition, Diet and Health (NDH) provide individuals and families with a knowledge base on which to make informed decisions about food, nutrition, and health. NDH programs are designed to (1) help people achieve and maintain optimal weight and reduce the risk of chronic disease, give birth to healthy babies, and practice responsible and healthy self-care; (2) help children and adults attain optimal long-term health; (3) minimize nutritional inadequacies and abuses of food; and (4) improve consumers' ability to make informed choices related to food safety, quality, and composition. Programs are shaped by the nation's family structures and lifestyles and are targeted for the nutritionally vulnerable. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program is an example of a program that reaches out to achieve these objectives among low-income families with young children.

Programs are shaped by the nation's family structures and lifestyles.

Mission

The mission of the Nutrition, Diet and Health Program is: *Through education, the Nutrition, Diet and Health Program empowers individuals, families, and communities, including policymakers, to make informed choices about food and lifestyles that support their physiological health and economic and social well-being.*

Vision

The Nutrition, Diet and Health Vision is: *The people of the United States will address and resolve individual, family, community, and national food and health issues.*

Goals, Objectives, and Actions

The Nutrition, Diet and Health goals, along with objectives and actions for each, are listed below.

Goal 1. *Every child and adult will have continuous access to a safe and adequate food supply.*

Extension will collaborate with other groups to ensure community access to a safe and adequate food supply.

Objectives. The people of the United States will:

- Be informed participants in resolving public policy issues concerned with food security and food safety.
- Exert a positive influence on the variety, availability, accessibility, affordability, and safety of community food supplies.
- Adopt safe and healthful food selection, preparation, and handling practices.
- Utilize a variety of resources (including food assistance programs) to make safe, nutritious, and economical food choices.

Actions. Extension will:

- Expand programs that target limited-resource, high-risk families and youth.
- With consideration of the diversity of the population, train professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteers in food selection, preparation, handling, and safety and in health-risk assessment procedures.
- Develop and implement food security programs for agricultural food producers, public policymakers, and the general public to broaden the concept of the food supply to include sustained accessibility—with special attention to local products.
- Create and/or collaborate with local, state, and national coalitions (including food assistance providers, policymakers, health professionals, and representatives of the agriculture industry and consumer advocacy groups) to develop strategies to ensure community access to a safe and adequate food supply.
- Provide Extension workers with professional development opportunities in public issues education.

Goal 2. People will engage in lifestyle practices that promote health.

Objectives. The people of the United States will:

- Use the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines* and the *Food Guide Pyramid* to choose a healthful diet.
- Integrate physical exercise into daily life.
- Adopt safe food selection, preparation, service, and storage practices.

- Practice personal health protection (e.g., immunization, breast self-examination, regular check-ups, cholesterol screening, sanitation, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, and prevention or cessation of smoking and substance abuse).
- Adopt dietary practices recommended for specific life-cycle stages.

Actions. Extension will:

- Collaborate in the design and implementation of community-based, applied research that helps people use knowledge to improve their personal health behaviors.
- Develop and refine a system for sharing successful educational programs.
- Collaborate with the communications media to deliver sound nutrition, diet, and health messages.
- Emphasize the importance of physical exercise in interdisciplinary nutrition and health education programs.
- Form coalitions and partnerships with the food industry, food service systems, and the health care system to increase the impact of educational programs.
- Influence research and public policy to address the needs of vulnerable high-risk groups, fully recognizing diverse needs.
- Pilot test, refine, and adopt the outcome indicators of the standardized *U.S. Dietary Guidelines*.

Goal 3. Communities will manage their resources to promote nutrition and health.

Objectives. The people of the United States will:

- Participate in the assessment of food, nutrition, and health needs in their communities.
- Identify resources with which to address local conditions that affect health and well-being.

Actions. Extension will:

- Develop coalitions, networks, and other types of collaborative arrangements to create and sustain support systems and educa-

Extension will develop and refine a system for sharing successful educational programs.

An impact assessment of coalition effectiveness will be conducted.

tional programs that promote sound nutrition, good diets, and health. Participants should include service recipients, educators, service providers, and business and community leaders as well as representatives of the health insurance industry, foundations, service organizations, transportation systems, and the agriculture and health care communities.

- Develop leadership skills among professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteers as well as participatory skills among citizens for planning and implementing community needs assessments, building coalitions, and shaping public policy.
- Recognizing the diverse needs of the general public, train professionals, paraprofessionals, and community leaders in decisionmaking related to health practices, including food selection, preparation, handling, and safety.
- Develop and conduct an impact assessment of coalition effectiveness.

Goal 4. The agricultural food production, processing, and distribution system will be responsive to the health needs of the population.

Objectives. Collaborators, professionals, and other participants in Extension programs will:

- Engage in dialogue about food, agricultural, and health issues that are important to communities.
- Promote leadership roles in creating an agricultural food production, processing, and distribution system that is responsive to the population's health needs.

Actions. Extension will:

- Form partnerships and coalitions (both internal and external to Extension) to develop strategies to ensure the sustainability of a healthful and safe food supply. Partners should include educators, legislators, and the communications media as well as representatives of agriculture, agribusiness, the health professions, and environmental, rural development, and consumer groups.
- Build consensus within the academic community on the interface of health issues and agricultural food production, processing, and distribution methods.

- Promote increased communication among consumer groups and the food industry to improve mutual understanding of product development.
- Provide staff development activities that strengthen conflict resolution skills in addition to subject-matter expertise.
- In cooperation with the health sciences, promote research in the areas of basic nutrition, food product development, and food safety as related to agricultural food production, processing, and distribution.
- Develop and conduct impact assessments of coalition effectiveness.

Goal 5. Nutrition, diet, and health issues will be research and education priorities.

Objectives. The people of the United States will:

- Understand the importance of research findings, including biotechnology, for their daily lives.
- Participate in identifying and prioritizing their own nutrition, diet, and health research and education needs.
- Apply research findings to their behaviors at all stages of the life cycle.

Actions. Extension will:

- In partnership with the research community, conduct and promote community-based, applied research that focuses on healthful lifestyle practices.
- Collaborate with state departments of education (including state Nutrition Education and Training coordinators) to ensure that all children have access to information about healthful lifestyles.
- Collaborate with other agencies, institutions, and organizations to provide nutrition and food safety education, particularly for vulnerable populations.
- Develop and refine a system for identifying, reviewing, and sharing effective educational programs in nutrition, diet, and health.

Extension program participants will apply research findings to their behaviors at all stages of the life cycle.

Implementation

The implementation of the Nutrition, Diet and Health Strategic Plan will require attention to a number of factors associated with program success, including program accountability; enhanced communication with other CES Base Programs, National Initiatives, and priorities; active partnerships, with emphasis on electronic technology and networking; and strategic funding.

Emphasis on Diversity

Extension's Emphasis on Diversity addresses the many dimensions of diversity that are already a feature of our mosaic society. Many organizations have a diverse work force and diverse program audiences—but are not necessarily multicultural organizations. The Emphasis on Diversity is designed to help Extension become a multicultural organization that values diversity and pluralism.

Mission

The mission of the CES Emphasis on Diversity is to *achieve and sustain pluralism as an integral part of every aspect of Extension, including missions and visions; the work force; audiences; and relationships with other people, groups, and organizations.*

Vision

The Emphasis on Diversity vision is: *The Cooperative Extension System is a diverse and multicultural organization that values, is committed to, and embodies pluralism as a long-term investment in the future.* This investment positions CES as a productive, effective, and relevant organization and as a role model for achieving a pluralistic society.

Values

The Cooperative Extension System recognizes that organizational values are important—indeed, critical—to achieving and sustaining diversity and pluralism. The values underlying this plan are:

- Commitment to diversity in all staff, volunteers, and audiences.
- Full participation in programs, policy formulation, and decisionmaking.
- Leadership in modeling diversity throughout the organization and in achieving a pluralistic society.
- Commitment to individual and organizational efforts to build respect, dignity, fairness, caring, equality, and self-esteem.

Organizational values are critical to achieving and sustaining diversity and pluralism.

CES will incorporate pluralism as an integral part of the System's mission and vision.

- Recognition of the rights of all individuals to mutual respect; acceptance of others without biases based on differences of any kind.
- Commitment to equitable treatment and elimination of discrimination in all its forms at all organizational levels and throughout all programs.
- Recognition and promotion of the diversity of ideas and human potential.

Goals

The goals of the Emphasis on Diversity include:

- *Commitment to pluralism.* CES will incorporate pluralism as an integral part of the System's mission and vision.
- *An environment that fosters diversity and pluralism.* CES will establish a physical, psychological, and emotional environment that creates, fosters, and sustains diversity and pluralism and that eliminates discrimination at all levels.
- *Work force diversity.* The Cooperative Extension System will increase and sustain the diversity of the System's work force, including its leadership, to better reflect the diversity of the population of the nation, states, and territories.
- *Audience and program diversity.* In selecting programs, the Cooperative Extension System will expand the diversity of current and potential audiences and programs to reflect the population of the nation, states, and territories.
- *Full and influential participation.* CES will include members of diverse groups as full and influential participants in all aspects of the System, especially in decisionmaking and in establishing policies that shape equitable partnerships in the organization and its programs.
- *Equitable partnerships.* CES will provide equitable partnerships, funding, and support for all Extension organizations, including 1890 and Tuskegee Extension organizations, 1862 state and territorial Extension organizations, the District of Columbia Extension Service, and the USDA Extension Service.

Communications Technology and Distance Education

The Cooperative Extension System, in addition to other public and private educational service providers, is moving from an emphasis on information dissemination to an emphasis on information access by focusing on customer-centered models. A critical facet of this paradigm shift is the need for information and education access and for the place and time of such access to be determined by the customer and/or the community, based on a wide variety of electronic communications technologies. The customer-driven model of this program supports the Administration's National Information Infrastructure applications program as demonstrated through existing and applied CES community-based communications technologies.

CES is committed to building a national information infrastructure.

Mission

The mission of Communications Technology and Distance Education (CTDE) is *to serve as a leader, catalyst, and "paradigm shifter" within the land-grant community in the design and organization of communications technology and distance education focused on the needs and access of the System's customers.* The design of a digital core of educational information and resources is vital to this mission.

Vision

CES is committed to building a national information infrastructure that links local community needs and the most current and specific information available. The Extension System is providing the presence, place, and process at the local level to help translate information into knowledge.

The Communications Technology and Distance Education Vision is: *CES will remain a leader in providing access to information, with specific goals providing an underlying base. It will fulfill its responsibility to the land-grant community to provide models for the design and organization of learning opportunities in the Information Age.*

The Extension System must provide models that reflect a shift from information dissemination to information access.

Values

In recognizing the value of a communications networking concept that is supportive of customer access to information and education, the Extension System has a responsibility to demonstrate and provide models for the design, organization, and implementation of learning opportunities appropriate for the technological future. These models must reflect a shift from emphasis on dissemination of information to provision of access to information. In addition to focusing on access, the System needs to value:

- Responsiveness to customer concerns.
- High-quality information and educational products.
- Availability of current, unbiased knowledge.
- Credibility in problem-solving.
- Attention to the human resource needs of customers and staff.

Goals

Communications Technology and Distance Education goals include:

- *Strategic "road maps"*—to establish strategic plans or road maps to guide the System in the effective use of communications technology.
- *An external orientation*—to position CES as a more externally oriented organization.
- *Staff development and program delivery*—to recognize the importance of expertise in communications technology for the future of CES and for staffing, training, and program design and delivery policies.
- *Networking and access*—to connect CES staff via high-speed computer network facilities to increase their access to world-wide resources and to gain the optimal CES commitment to networked video access.
- *Distance education*—to design distance education programs with explicit learning objectives for delivery, using technology mixes that establish interaction with learners, formats compatible with individual learning styles, and locations convenient for the learner.

Key to the success of Communications Technology and Distance Education are (1) recognition of new realities of the 21st century and of the information and technological future, including global thinking, the diversity of the learning audience, and the changing roles of learners; (2) leadership in the systematic design of distance education, permitting measurable outcomes and demonstrating success at the county, state, and federal levels; (3) mechanisms for human resource development, including but not limited to faculty and staff training, incentives for and recognition of effort, and resource support; and (4) learner support and/or resource mechanisms to operationalize quality program efforts to the fullest extent possible.

The System needs to value responsiveness to customer concerns.

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